*424. [The questioner (Sh. K. Kalavenkata Rao) was absent. For answer *vide* page 23 *infra]*

Overlapping of publishing activity of Sahitya Akademi

*425. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the monetary component of the Sahitya Akademi Annual Awards for excellence of literary activities is too meager as compared with similar awards instituted by the Non- Government Organizations;

(b) if so, whether there is any possibility of enhancing the monetary part of these awards to make them appear more respectable;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is evident overlapping of publishing activity undertaken by Sahitya Akademi, National Book Trust and the Publications Division of the Ministry of I and B; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to coordinate their publishing projects?

. THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Sahitya Akademi Award is the highest honour bestowed in recognition of excellence in the field of literature. The Sahitya Akademi gives 22 Awards in different languages, 4 Bhasha Sammans and 22 Translation prizes each year. No other organization, whether governmental or non-governmental confers as many awards in as many languages in a single year. The Sahitya Akademi Awards enjoy great reputation and their importance cannot be measured in terms of the monetary component of the Award.

(c) and (d) In actuality there is no overlapping of publications undertaken by Sahitya Akademi and the Publications Division of the Ministry of I and B. Sahitya Akademi is in constant touch with the National Book Trust to avoid any duplication.

SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Sir, the reply says that the Sahitya Akademi Award is the highest honour bestowed in recognition of excellence in the field of literature. But the amount of award is just Rs. 25,000 which is probably equal to Rs. 2,000 when I got the award 50 years ago. Sir, the amount

of award which is given by the private sector and by the Academies at the State level is far higher than this amount. I think this award should be made more attractive for the awardee.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: Sir, ultimately the award given by the Sahitya Akademi is a national recognition, more than the prize amount. When we look into the amount for the awards that are given by the Lalit Kala Akademy or the other Academies, it is also equivalent. Sir, the Sahitya Akademi gives 22 awards in different languages, 22 awards for translations in 22 different languages, and 4 awards in various unlisted languages. Sir, the number of awards which the other institutions give is only one—for example, the Gyanpeeth Award—whereas the number of awards here is 48. Despite that, I also appreciate the concern of the hon. Member that from 1955, the prize amount has been increased from Rs. 5,000 to only Rs. 25,000 in the last 50 years. There is need to look into it. Therefore, consultation is going on with the Sahitya Akademi.

SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Today's Rs. 25,000/- is equal to Rs. 5,000/- of 1965. If financial constraints are there, I suggest that rather than making the award an annual affair, the frequency could be reduced and that the award could be given in alternate years. As it is, the Sahitya Akademi has given 40 to 45 awards in each language since its institution. We do not have 40 to 45 outstanding writers in each language. The result is that the awards are now going to second rate writers. I think that the frequency should be reduced and that the award money should be high.

SHRIANANTH KUMAR: Sir, financial constraint is not a consideration. We have 48 awardees who are capable of getting these awards in 22 different unlisted languages of the country. There is enough talent. Actually, there is a very healthy competition also. I am assuring the hon. Member that the Culture Ministry is looking into the matter. We are consulting with the Sahitya Akademi on revision of the prize amount.

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI:. Sir, I have personally no objection to increasing this prize amount. But, I feel that there are so many prizes being given and that not much work to promote the literature as such is being done. Will the hon. Minister consider that, as in the case of the Presidential awards, there is no monetary compensation as such for awards? On the other hand, this is a national ecognition. In view of the very increased number of awardees

and the high amount of awards by other institutions, will he consider that the monetary kind of compensation for award should be abolished? Instead devote that amount to promotion of the real purposes of the Sahitya Akademi J Number two is about part (c) where it has been said that there is duplication in the Sahitya Akademi, the National Book Trust and the Publications Division. I personally somehow or other feel that, as far as their work is concerned, there is no duplication. More and more books on the subjects should be published. I find that all these three agencies are under three different Ministries. One is with (he Ministry of Culture. The other one is with the Publications Division. The third one is with the Ministry of Education. I think there is need for more effective coordination. Will the Minister assure this House that he will call a meeting of the representatives of these bodies and work out that instead of publishing the books in an *ad hoc* manner, the books are published in a more coordinated way so that the purposes of these institutions are fulfilled.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR: First of all, the prize amount for the Sahitya Akademi awardees will continue.

Secondly, regarding his information that there are a large number of awards, it is not factually correct. For a country of 1 billion people, there are only 14 national awards in the country. I can read out their names, but there is no time for that.

Thirdly, whatever these awardees get, those books are being published by the Sahitya Akademi and the National Book Trust as well as the Publications Division of the I&B. There is coordination between all the three agencies. In the last so many years, not even a single book has been duplicated. The themes have been the same. For example, in the last three years, books on Rabindranath Tagore, Basavanna. Mirza Ghalib, Shri Aurobindo, Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh have been written from different perspectives. They are not being duplicated. They have never been from the same author.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Outstanding income tax dues against Film Actresses

*424. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state: